

# **Waterfront Special Development District Commission**

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## **Minutes of Monday, January 23, 2006 Public Hearing**

Present were: members: Chairman Rogers, Jay Gregory, Dr. Isadore Ramos, John Lynch, Luis Torrado, John Pesce, Laura McNamara (by proxy), Jacob Harpootian (by proxy), ex-officio members: Steve Coutu, Attorney Robin Main, Lori Capaldi, staff: Jeanne Boyle and Heidi Green.

The meeting began at 6:35 p.m.

### **1. Chairman's Opening Remarks**

#### Ethical Obligations of Commission Members

Chairman Rogers reminded the Commission to be sensitive to ethical duties as well as applicable laws and regulations.

#### Preview of 2006

Chairman Rogers stated that 2006 will be a busy year. He believes Geonova, FRE and Phillipsdale will submit their application soon which will trigger several subcommittee and full commission meetings.

Director Boyle also added that there will be significant infrastructure improvements. She stated that the southern portion of Waterfront Drive should be going out to bid and construction should begin in the summer. She also indicated that the Dexter Road Connector is going out to comment for the 30% Plan and the process will proceed into 2006.

#### Chairman's Report to City Council

Chairman Rogers made his annual report to City Council. He highlighted the Waterfront Commission's accomplishments such as the various Request for Proposals, the advertising brochure and the various projects that were approved. The Council was complementary.

#### Legislative Changes/Commission Vacancies

Chairman Rogers indicated that there were three governor's appointments that needed to be filled. Chairman Rogers advised Senator Daniel Daponte of his concerns about quorums and diversity of the Commissioners.

#### Financial Report

Chairman Rogers stated that Director Boyle had prepared a year end report concerning expenditures for 2005. He stated that the Commission is going to have the auditor who performs

the audit for the City will also perform the audit for the Waterfront Commission. Chairman Rogers stated that the Waterfront Commission will be receiving the \$100,000 grant from the Economic Development Corporation in the next few weeks.

#### Brochure/Communications Efforts

Chairman Rogers commented that the photographs and text were of high caliber and Advertising Adventures did a good job on the brochure. Director Boyle indicated that perhaps Advertising Adventures could design a graphic depicting the new zoning districts so it is consistent with the brochure. Attorney Main also suggested a brief fact sheet. Mr. Lynch asked if the letterhead was completed. Director Boyle informed the Commissioners that she received the CD and was going to send it out to bid. Mr. Lynch stated that there should also be a business card with Director Boyle's contact information included with the brochure.

#### D & O Insurance

Chairman Rogers informed the Commissioners that the Directors and Officers Liability insurance policy had been renewed with Starkweather & Shepley.

### **2. Approval of Minutes**

#### **A. Minutes of November 22, 2005**

Chairman Rogers asked if there were any changes to the minutes and there were none. Motion to approve was made by Mr. Gregory and seconded by Mr. Lynch.

### **3. New Business**

#### **A. Decorative Lighting**

Ms. Bradford highlighted the important details of decorative lighting such as the cut off fixtures, pole height and materials, light uniformity, light hierarchy and commonality within the Waterfront District. Ms. Bradford suggested matching steel slat benches and slat trash receptacles.

Chairman Rogers asked Ms. Bradford if she would be willing to be the Commission's decorative lighting expert which would entail meeting with the developers, Steve Coutu and the Design Review Committee to provide advice on how to select the appropriate decorative lighting.

Mr. Coutu stated that the City currently does not maintain decorative lighting. He said decorative lighting is installed and maintained by Narragansett Electric. He said that Ross Commons should be responsible for the decorative lighting on the property and on the street.

## **B. RFP Architectural Design Responses**

Ms. Green provided the Commission with an overview of the four responses received to the Request for Proposals to Develop Design Guidelines and for Architectural Design Review Services. Ms. Green recommended that the Waterfront Commission create a short list of the top two architectural firms, the partnership of Samuel Shamoon and Glen Fontecchio as well as Bradford Associates make presentations for the February meeting. There was a Motion made by Dr. Ramos to create a short list with Samuel Shamoon and Glen Fontecchio as well as Bradford Associates. The Motion further called for each of the firms to make a presentation at the February meeting. Motion seconded by Mr. Lynch.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Lynch	Aye
Mr. Coutu	Aye
Dr. Ramos	Aye
Mr. Pesce	Aye
Mr. Gregory	Aye
Mr. Rogers	Aye
Mr. Torrado	Aye

## **4. Continued Business**

### **A. Affordable Housing Requirements/Policies**

Director Boyle stated that low or moderate income is considered 80% of the median income for a family of four from Greater Providence equals \$58,000. Pursuant to the regulations, families should not pay more than 30% of their household income on housing. The range for affordable units is between \$150,000 and \$209,000. The variation is due to interest rate, carrying cost, and construction materials. The lower end of the range does not adjust for current income figures.

Ms. Boyle indicated that a quick analysis of the Waterfront District shows that there are not too many residential parcels upon which off-site units could be constructed. Also, within East Providence municipal government, there is not an entity that can actually build the affordable units. Dr. Ramos suggested that someone from the housing industry give a presentation to the Commission. Ms. Boyle suggested that perhaps 2-3 speakers from different sectors could provide presentations.

## **5. Reports of Commission's Subcommittees**

### **A. Design Review Committee**

#### **1. 105 Valley Street storage facility**

Mr. Gregory said the Design Review Committee heard the Application from Display World for a Permit for an Interim Non-Conforming Use. The application was unanimously approved.

**B. Hearing Panel**

1. 105 Valley Street storage facility

Dr. Ramos stated that the application of Display World was unanimously approved by the Hearing Panel and the Waterfront Commission delegated final decision making authority to the Hearing Panel.

**6. Miscellaneous Other Business**

**A. Change in February 20<sup>th</sup> meeting because of the holiday**

Chairman Rogers acknowledged that the next Waterfront Commission meeting scheduled for February 20<sup>th</sup> will have to be rescheduled.

**7. Staff Report**

**A. General Counsel's Report**

Attorney Main indicated that the changes that CRMC is making to its *Greenway* policy will affect the waterfront and it would be best if those affects could be minimized.

**B. Executive Director's Report**

Ms. Boyle informed the board that she had no reports at this time.

**8. Communications**

Mr. Gregory stated that he had two changes to the DRC/Hearing Panel Minutes of January 5, 2006. The first change was to page 3, paragraph 4. He stated that he did support increased view corridors and as such the third sentence should be the exact opposite to what it is presently. The second change is to page four; boon should be changed to boom.

**9. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeanne M. Boyle  
Interim Executive Director

JMB/hjg